

REMARKS

In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, Applicant requests favorable reconsideration of this application.

Claims 1, 2, 4, 7, 9, 11 and 12 remain pending in this application, with Claim 1 being independent. By this Amendment, Applicant has canceled Claims 3, 5, 10, 13, and 15, and amended Claims 1, 2, 4, 7, and 11.

Claims 1-5, 7, and 9-12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Publication No. 2004/0151462 (Furuyama). Claim 13 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Furuyama. Claim 15 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Furuyama in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,477,286 (Ouchi). Applicant traverses these rejections.

As recited in independent Claim 1, Applicant's invention is directed to an optical waveguide apparatus. The waveguide apparatus includes a sheet-shaped optical waveguide, a light emitting unit for emitting a light beam to the waveguide, light receiving units for receiving light propagating in the waveguide, and a light diffusing structure for diffusing the light beam from the light emitting unit. The light diffusing structure is located closer to the light receiving units than the emitting unit. Also, a light beam emitted by the light emitting unit propagates to the light diffusing structure, is diffused by the light diffusing structure, and the receiving units receive the light diffused by that light diffusing structure. Furthermore, the light emitting unit, at least one of the light receiving units, and the light diffusing structure are not located on a straight line extending along the sheet-shaped optical waveguide.

With the thus-described invention, the light diffusing structure can propagate light to a light receiving unit that is not aligned with both the light diffusing structure and light

emitting unit along the sheet-shaped waveguide. An example of this can be seen in Figure 4, which shows a light emitting unit 10, light diffusing structures 414, and light receiving units 412.

Furuyama is directed to an optical circuit board for propagating an optical signal. In the waveguide described in Furuyama, light is transmitted along a straight line along the length of the waveguide, such that the emission point of the light, the reflection point of the light, and the reception point of the light are aligned along a straight line, as shown in Figures 5-7 of that patent. Furthermore, light reflecting units 6 do not change the direction of the light along the waveguide; thus, even if a light receiving unit 7 were to be repositioned so as not to align with the emission and reflecting points, reflector 6 would not propagate light in a different direction along the waveguide so as to reach the repositioned light receiving unit 7.

Ouchi is merely cited in the Office Action as describing a vertical waveguide formed to interact with a horizontal waveguide. Applicant submits that this document fails to remedy the deficiencies discussed above with respect to Furuyama.

Accordingly, Applicant submits that Furuyama and Ouchi, taken alone or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest at least a sheet-shaped optical waveguide in which the light emitting unit, at least one of the light receiving units and the light diffusing structure are not located on a straight line extending along the sheet-shaped waveguide, wherein the light beam emitted by the light emitting unit propagates through the light diffusing structure, the light beam is diffused by the light diffusing structure, and the receiving unit receives the light diffused by the light diffusing structure, as recited in independent Claim 1.


The remaining claims in this application are dependent claims which depend from independent Claim 1. Applicant submits that the dependent claims are allowable for the

reasons set forth above with respect to that independent claim. In addition, those claims recite additional features that further distinguish them from the cited patent documents. Applicant requests favorable and independent consideration of the dependent claims.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicant requests withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102 and 103, and allowance of this application.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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